

## **The mobilities of ships and shipped mobilities**

**Anyaa Anim-Addo\*, William Hasty\*\* and Kimberley Peters\*\*\***

\*School of History, University of Leeds, West Yorkshire, UK

\*\*School of GeoSciences, University of Edinburgh, UK

\*\*\*Department of Geography and Earth Sciences, Aberystwyth University, Ceredigion, UK

In the burgeoning field of mobilities studies, the seas and all that moves in, on, across and through them, have not been embraced with the same enthusiasm as mobilities ashore. While trains (Verstraete 2002), planes (Adey 2010) and automobiles (Merriman 2007) have received sustained attention, alongside walking subjects (Middleton 2010), wired networks (Graham 2009), and mobile ideas (Law 1986); the ship (a prime figure in seaborne movement) has, for some time, been quietly bobbing in the background (Peters 2010, 1243). It is important to note that the work of the mobilities paradigm has not omitted the politics of sea-based movements entirely (see, for example, recent entries in this journal; Ashmore 2013; Straughan and Dixon 2013; Stanley 2008), but it remains true that mobilities ‘at sea’ are a vastly underexplored area, with more comprehensive incursions only just beginning to emerge (Anderson and Peters 2014, Vannini 2012, Birtchnell, Urry and Sativsky, forthcoming). This work has helped set in motion a shift towards the seas, following a more general oceanic reorientation with the humanities (see Blum 2010), bringing the rhythms and movements of people, objects, materials, ideas – all manner of things – into focus through the lens of mobilities thinking.

The following special issue has been inspired by this changing tide, rising off the back of a series of events that have sought to bring the water-world and its manifold maritime mobilities into view. A thumbnail genealogy will illustrate. In 2010, the editors of this collection organised a session at the Royal Geographical Society's annual conference with the Institute of British Geographers (RGS-IBG), entitled ‘Geographies of Ships’ which sought to explore the spaces, places, times and scales of the ship and the journeys it made possible, in the past and present. This was followed in 2011 by a ‘Maritime Roundtable’ workshop held collaboratively between Royal Holloway University of London and the University of Glasgow. Here the effort to expand an empirical and conceptual understanding of the mobilities of the ship was extended with the presentation of more specialised and focused papers concerning a range of shipped movements. This was further developed in 2013 with a session explicitly entitled ‘Maritime Mobilities’ at the RGS-IBG, headed by Emma Spence

with a discussant session led by Kimberley Peters. During these workshops and conferences, discussion drifted between the related notions of ships' mobilities and shipped mobilities; the former being a focus on the movements *of* sea-going vessels and the latter being an interest in what is moved *by* ships in particular circumstances; from the movement of goods, to flows of capital, to the transmission of ideas. The ship as a *moving* thing and *mover* of things could not easily be separated.

Accordingly, in what follows we introduce this special issue by paying attention to these categories; what we are calling the 'mobilities of ships' and 'shipped mobilities'. We begin by positioning the ship, examining a few instances where studies have attended to notions of mobility in this context, before outlining the longstanding omission of ships from the raft of work situated under the rubric of 'mobilities research'. We turn next to the potential of engaging the ship in this field of research, presenting possible avenues of enquiry for future studies of maritime mobilities. Here we focus on the ways in which the mobilities *of* ships and the mobilities facilitated *by* ships may be explored, highlighting where such research furthers the ambitions of mobilities scholarship more generally. We conclude this introduction by surveying the papers that make up this special issue.

### **Positioning the ship**

Seafaring is an ancient and constant social practice, one that has no discernable beginning or end, one that is thoroughly embedded in the way that humans have understood, explored and lived in the world. The ship is, therefore, one of the oldest technologies of motion (Lavery 2005, Woodman 2005) and as such one of the most important ways that humans have moved. Despite this, however, these mobile and mobilising objects are only now registering on the list of technologies that interest mobilities scholars (Hasty and Peters 2012). Perhaps this is because in a world of speed, time-space compression and the supposed annihilation of distance (see Massey 1997) they are thought as "slow, old fashioned, cumbersome" (Peters 2010, 1245). The world can now be traversed, in a fashion, at the click of the button via technologies that facilitate face time connections in cyber worlds by tying together disparate spaces. Physical motion too is faster than ever before. The commercialisation of air travel in the 1950s (see Adey 2010) made possible transatlantic journeys in 7 hours as opposed to 7 days. People still move by ship in many different circumstances – with ferries connecting island communities, cruise ships sailing with tourists aboard, migrants crossing the Mediterranean in the dead of night – but with the 'shrinking' of the world, the prominence of

the ship has diminished in our collective imagination. This special issue calls for recognition of its vital role in the movement of things around the world, its centrality to the function of global capitalism, and its importance as a global connector, as well as its role in, amongst other things, labour politics, recreational travel and individual experience.

Unsurprisingly, other, faster, more visible methods of moving, by plane, train, car and virtual reality have dominated the examinations of those working in the area of mobilities studies (Adey 2010, Bissell 2010, Merriman 2012). Whilst this work has been of great importance (and continues to have relevance) in understanding the complexities of (post)modern societies, it has, as this introduction argues, been rather terra-centric, focusing largely on landed mobilities and neglecting those that take place at sea. Notably, Adey's work has pushed the vision of mobilities upwards, focusing attention on the vertical spaces of motion opened up by air travel (2010, 2013, see also Adey et al. 2013). Attending to motions through air space, Adey complicates how we understand the politics of motion through materiality. Accounting for the differences apparent when travelling through air changes how we understand motion on roads or rails, introducing notions of turbulence, for example. Indeed, this work moves us beyond conceptualising a world of surfaces we move on, over and across; to fluid zones we move through (see Forsyth et al, 2013). These conceptual and empirical moves wrought from encounters with vertical mobilities offer useful anchorage points for work on maritime mobilities.

Such a focus will, arguably, become increasingly important and, perhaps, necessary in all sorts of ways. The boom in mobility over the past few generations, and our attention to it in research over the past few decades, centres on the (ab)use of carbon-based fuels. As Urry (2012) notes, peak-oil might well coincide with peak-mobility, ushering in a new era of slower, more restricted movement, central to which will, undoubtedly, be the ship with its ability to shift across distances great and small under the power of wind, current and muscle. In a recent prospectus on the future of mobilities studies, Cresswell (2014, 4) ruminates briefly on this "transition", insisting that, when it "occurs it will necessitate new patterns of movement, new narratives of mobility and new configurations of mobile practice. We will all have to figure out ways of moving differently". Looking to the seas and ships will certainly be a significant part of this new agenda.

For now, the sea, and ships which travel through it, offer interesting opportunities, akin to those presented by air and airplanes, to move beyond a terrestrial focus to alternate material, elemental spaces that prompt us to rethink mobile action and the relations made through mobilities. What, we might ask, following the work of Palsson (1994), does the

movements of sea and ship mean for the act of walking? How does one develop a different way of being in the world through ship-based mobilities? Such opportunities, whilst not yet fully apprehended by mobilities scholars, have been gaining increasing interest in other disciplines. Within the field of maritime studies for example, close attention has been paid to the mobile nature of seafaring and oceanic lives (Hasty 2011, Ogborn 2008,). Indeed, in this respect, the “experiences” associated with lives at sea have long been interrogated by scholars of the Royal and merchant navies (see Davies 2013). ‘New’ maritime history in particular has examined how seafaring and oceanic mobilities were affected by categories of gender, class and race (for example, see Balachandran 2012, Bolster 1998, Steel 2011). By considering maritime lives on shore as well as at sea, maritime studies have raised questions of (im)mobilities, albeit without using such terms (Land 2007, Creighton and Norling 1996). While maritime historians have much to contribute to the debate, particularly on the experience of oceanic mobilities, such research has yet to commit to full dialogue with mobilities scholarship. The historical contributions to this special issue work towards bridging this divide.

Whilst historians have been mindful of marine and maritime mobilities, so too have geographers and critical theorists, but again largely without engaging the ideas and concepts developed in mobilities studies. Research examining the flow of information, ideas and long distance control through ‘actor networks’ (see Law 1986), for example, have investigated the potential of the ship as a method by which power was/is mobilised and how this mattered for the diffusion of power from the centre of empires to distant imperial footholds (see also Lambert 2005; Ogborn 2002). Geographers have, moreover, argued that the seas, and the ships that journey upon and through them, open up new spatial imaginaries for mobilising a vision of the world that moves beyond the constructed borders of the nation-state, promising a more fluid way of conceptualising territory and interconnection (Lambert et al, 2006). For example, Featherstone’s work shows how the ship, as a site of ‘dynamic spatial practices’, ‘dislocates dominant geographical imaginaries’ (2008). This work touches upon issues of mobility without really developing a *mobilities* approach to the study of ships or the seas more generally. The papers that feature in this issue variously grapple with this issue, in particular, with the tensions between land and sea, national and international space, fixity and fluidity, through a range of empirical lenses, from the steam packet ship, to the luxury yacht, to the pirate vessel. The work of this special issue, then, is to realise some of this promise, bringing mobilities sensibilities to bear on the multiple worlds of the ship.

Now is a salient time to rise to this challenge. In recent years there has been a watery turn across social science and arts and humanities disciplines (Hasty and Peters 2012, 660). This is evident in the range of publications concerning the sea, in disciplines such as History (see Rediker 2007), Architecture (Ryan 2012), English Literature (Sobecki 2008), Art (Mack 2011) and Geography (Steinberg 2001; Anderson and Peters 2014), to name but a few. Amidst this move to unlock the terra-centric and land-locked nature of academic scholarship, the ship, as opposed to the sea itself, remains rather marginal. As Hasty and Peters note in an article that sought to position the ship in geographical study,

despite marked attention to nautical worlds, the ship, so central to the function of maritime life, remains a largely neglected figure in the literature; a regularly acknowledged but seldom considered feature of the maritime world ... (2012, 660).

This ‘neglect’, as we have noted, is also a feature in the ‘mobilities paradigm’, a pivotal shift in social sciences which has sought to take seriously the politics of movement, where “the importance of the systematic movements of people for work and family life, for leisure and pleasure, and for politics and protest” had once been “ignored and trivialised” (Sheller and Urry 2006, 208). The central argument of this introduction and the papers that follow it is, therefore, that further understanding these phenomena cannot progress without going to sea and aboard the ship.

The advent of mobilities studies has been, in part, a response to ‘traditional’ transport geographies as a way of understanding what moves, how, where and why (see Shaw and Hesse 2010, 305). Transport geographers have typically started their examinations from an epistemological position based on “empiricist/positivist assumptions, methods of data collection and modelling” that privilege “objectivity and truth” over the subjective and multiple meanings and experiences that come with moving (Ibid, 2010, 306). Ships have long been part and parcel of a more transport orientated approach to thinking through movement (see Knowles, 2006). Typically, here, attention has been paid to fixed pockets of space, such as the beginning or end of a journey: the ship in port. As Ingold argues, “[t]ransport ... is essentially destination orientated” (2011, 150). The space in-between, movement itself, is relegated, or seen in a simplistic, one dimensional manner; as a process of ‘just moving’. However, as scholars over the past ten years have shown, movement is never straightforward. The focus on mobilities, an agenda pushed forth by sociologists (Urry 2000), architects

(Jensen 2012), geographers (Adey 2010, Cresswell 2006, Merriman 2012), and others, has sought to unpack the meaning-filled intricacies of movement and challenge a stable, or sedentary, metaphysics (see Cresswell 2006, 27; Sheller and Urry 2006, 208). Ingold's concept of 'wayfaring' develops this also and becomes an important framework for thinking through the significance of ships' mobilities (2011). Ingold too, challenges a sedentarist approach to thinking of the world and the world of experience. He contends that "lives are not led *inside* places but through, around, to and from them, from and to places elsewhere" (2011, 150). For Ingold, being in the world is not made in containers we typically call 'space' but rather is constituted through movement; lines, or paths that weave together into complex meshworks. This 'logic of inversion' (focusing not on enclosed spaces but the complex inhabitation of world) is useful for thinking of the ship. Often thought of as an enclosed space, the ship; a mobile and still place (externally and internally respectively); a space that encompasses an interior and exterior, an inside and outside – a space predicated on boundaries – can instead be seen as one that is part of a wider global fabric or *meshwork* of movement; of ties and knots forging places, times and experiences.

Yet it is Cresswell's (2010) recent intervention that has provided, to date, the most comprehensive way in which we may consider, the meanings constituted in and through movement. Here he advocates that mobilities are understood 'singularly' – as if the same character or style of movement is shared by all who make it (2010, 17). Instead, Cresswell contends that journeys must be explored in view of the "force" that drives them, the "speed" of travel, the "friction" that stops or prevents the journey, the "rhythm" that shapes movements, the "route" of travel, and the "experiences" of those who live such movements (Cresswell 2010, 17). This agenda suggests useful ways of troubling Euclidean conceptualisations of geometric movement by foregrounding enfolded, multiple, complex, shifting and layered methods, registers and sensations of moving. Accordingly, several papers in this special issue engage with this injunction.

The ubiquity and familiarity of bodies (Bissell 2010, Cresswell 2006, Wylie 2005), mobile technologies (Adey 2010, Merriman 2007, Verstraete 2002), and circulating ideas and information mean that they have quickly come under the theoretical lenses of mobilities scholars embracing this approach. The absence of the sea from explicitly focused mobilities research may, in part, be attributed to the material and metaphysical zone in which ships are often put to work: the sea. The sea's position in the background of mobilities studies echoes the broader tendency in Western thought to see the sea as lifeless, a backdrop, a realm distinct and distant from the land (Steinberg 2013). The sea is a space at the very edges of

our everyday consciousness, a space we have forgotten to look to in considering mobility, a space Sekula and Birch (2010) argue only enters our vision when ‘disaster strikes’. The sea has traditionally been understood in terms of emptiness, disorder and danger, a space antithetical to the land (Connery, 2006), though it needs to be noted that such views have their own histories and geographies that are far from universal or constant (see Mack 2011 and Raban 1999). As Steinberg (2001) suggests, the sea has for a long time been seen as a space to be crossed as quickly as possible to reach the places that matter, *grounded* centres of capital (Steinberg 2001).

As such, modern and postmodern thinking has conceptualised the sea in a way that seemingly denies from the outset the possibility of seeing it as relevant in the study of mobilities. If the focus of studies of mobility are on the space between points A and B (see Cresswell 2006, 3), but the space between is typically disregarded as a barrier to be traversed for economic and political gain, then we can begin to make sense of why the sea and maritime mobilities have remained obscured for so long, despite the fervour of the recent mobilities turn. Arguably, however, the project of mobilities research, the unpacking of the space between fixed points A and B, the unlocking of the route, rhythm, experience, friction and speed of mobilities (Cresswell 2010), positively urges us to think about maritime spaces. At sea, there are an abundance of ‘gaps’ between A’s and B’s, journeys, moments in transit, lives lived on the move, which have been hitherto overlooked in favour of the apparent fixity and thus importance of points of departure and arrival at either side, on land. This special issue considers the ‘gaps’ within the broader gap of the sea, namely ships. This issue attends to these overlooked spaces in historical and contemporary mobilities research by focusing on a range of ships (from steamships to cargo ships), employed in a variety of contexts (from trade to leisure), and the mobilisations that have been made possible by such shipping (in the form of the movement of the things and stuff that make up our material world).

### **Mobilising the ship**

Though it appears obvious to those whose work is primarily maritime, the case for the ship needs to be made clear: why should we care about ships? Can their routine omission be read as a sign of their irrelevance to past and present socio-cultural, political and economic life? Indeed, alongside the construction of the sea as an empty space, one to be merely crossed to reach places of significance, it has been argued that the sea is irrelevant in any case, because it is not a space of everyday life or “permanent sedentary habitation” (Steinberg 1999, 386).

Most of us do not live our lives at sea, so its bearing on daily existence barely registers. The notion of ‘sedentary’ is crucial here too. Traditionally, as Cresswell tells us (2006), movement has been deemed to be the antithesis of stable forms of place and senses of belonging, the negative to the positive associations of stillness. The sea has been further relegated therefore, as a space of potential concern. Yet, now that “issues of mobility are centre stage” (Sheller and Urry 2006, 208), the mobile space between becomes of interest as we seek to unpack ‘sociology *beyond* societies’ (Urry 2000, emphasis added). The sea is a rich space for the examination of mobilities, being a mobile, four dimensional plateau in and of itself (Steinberg 2013) that is assembled in wider constellations of motionful elements (subject to winds, the gravitation pull of the moon, and so forth – see Jones 2011, Peters 2012). Moreover, it is a space on which, through which, and under which, technologies, people and commodities are made mobile. Furthermore, the sea is also a space through which we may investigate worlds of immobility and the ramifications that result in stoppage within these zones of seemingly incessant flux. As Anim-Addo demonstrates, the shipped mobilities of the Royal Mail Steam Packet Company relied on fixed nodes, such as coaling stations, to make their voyages possible (2011). The range of conditions that immobilise shipping (such as turbulence (Cresswell and Martin, 2012)), legal regulations (Peters 2011), and the changing state of water (Vannini and Taggart 2014) are also a key concern in view of understanding economic, political, and socio-cultural life, in the past and present. Whatever their form and consequences, these (im)mobilities are so often tied up with ships, and as such they are a central concern for this special issue.

Indeed, thus far we have contended that mobilities studies must now pay concerted attention to the ship. However, in what ways should the ship be studied and what potential does it offer for expanding debates and bringing new understandings to the fore in mobilities studies more generally? Firstly there is need to think about the actual mobility of ships themselves, about why, how and where ships move? Whilst these are seemingly straightforward questions, critically attending to these in light of the mobilities paradigm helps us to unpick the politics tied up with seafaring. For example, investigating how technologies drive the movement of ships can tell us much about the making of the modern world. Anim-Addo’s historical work on coaling stations (2011) and the steamship opens up new understandings of the nodes, such as coaling stations, and flows, such as the movements of ships made possible by coal fuel, that were vital to colonial and extra-imperial movements in the 1800s. Martin’s (2013) analysis of shipping container mobilities demonstrates the wider implications of changing rhythms and routines of ships, showing how these processes



were connected to shifting ideological and political processes and were ultimately linked to broad social issues such as gentrification in British cities. Following the work of Hodson and Vannini on ferry mobilities between Vancouver Island and the mainland, we might also ask about ‘how’ ships move in view of theories of time and temporality(2007). Vannini (2012) explores how such journeys form an integral part of the life-worlds of islanders, with disruptions, delays and cancellations triggering a host of impacts on service users. Attention to the causes of how ships may become immobilised also draws our attention to the more-than-human elements that can interfere with how ships move and the movement of bodies on ships. Ships may have to deviate from prescribed routes because of ice, storms, or changing conditions below the surface (see Peters 2012). Ships may also be moved beyond the control of those operating them by elemental forces, resulting in motions of drifting (Peters 2014). Thinking through these questions of how ships move alerts us to the implications that the (im)mobilities of ships have on global supply chains and the impacts of infrastructural breakdown (see Graham and Thrift 2007). Papers in this issue begin to attend to questions of ‘how’ ships move. [Author 5] considers the role of sea in shaping covert surveillance movements, asking how the materialities of the sea itself prevent the detection of rogue movement on and through oceans.

The ‘where’ of shipping movements is a vital concern too. Interrogating the journeys of shipping permits new understandings related to frictions and flows (see Cresswell 2010). Indeed, a study of the ‘where’ of shipping movements does not need to retreat to an apolitical study of A to B movements, but can be a way to unlock watery politics. Indeed, research in international relations (see Lobo-Guerrero 2011) has explored the role of insurance regimes and shipping. With the threat of piracy still present in many parts of the world, ships often have to change course to avoid ‘hot spots’ in pinch-points such as channels and straits. In these zones, crews must follow specific regulations on speed, and enact particular body movements on-board to facilitate disciplined observation. Following the movements of ships in terms of questions of ‘where’ has also gained attention in geography through the ‘Waste of the World’ project, which sought to trace the movements of ships from life on the ocean to death on the beaches of Chittagong (see Gregson et al. 2011). This attention to following the ‘where’ of ships during their lifespan has brought into view the ways in which people, places and times are tied together in previously unrecognised ways. Indeed, the papers in this special issue demonstrate how engaging the ship and sea is vital for understanding the land. Anyaa Anim-Addo and Andrew Davies in this issue show how the ship and the shore are connected in fresh ways, demonstrating how mobilities at sea are never disconnected from those on

land. The movements of ships then, transcend the space of the deck and sea and allow us to reconfigure understandings of the connected spaces of land and also air [see Author 5]. The omission of the ship, as these contributions show, is the omission of a vital frame through which mobilities may be understood. In a world of flows and connections, where space is thought of in relational, fluid terms (Massey 2005) rather than as something fixed, it is entirely appropriate and perhaps necessary to include the seas and ships that sail them as part of this wider global assemblage.

If we are to think about the mobilities *of* ships as important in contributing to a wider picture of fluid, global mobilities, then we must likewise pay attention to the mobilities that are facilitated *by* ships. How, for example, does power disperse, knowledge move, identity shift and cargo travel, through the medium of the ship? For example, the ship can become a lens for exploring logistics (see Cowen 2010 and author 6, this issue) and the frictions, turbulence, stasis and flow of supply chains (Sekula and Birch, 2010). In short, a host of related mobilities and immobilities can be traced from the ship itself. This project remains to be expanded by mobilities scholars who can trace the politics of mobility through the material and immaterial cargo of ships. Moreover, this attention need not focus only on ships as ‘large’ or ‘ocean-going’ vessels, but should encompass other kinds of water craft (see Vannini 2009). This issue attempts to demonstrate the potential in moving beyond the ship, to other sea-going vessels, such as the luxury yacht and the small ‘tender’ boats supplying radio ships in the North Sea [authors 4 and 5]. These craft, different in size, design, purpose from larger ocean-going ships present us with an array of mobile narratives which further demonstrate the potential of this research area. There is opportunity to extend this scope further still to investigate the range of sea-going craft (and also those that move along rivers and canals), from submarines, to surfers, to rafts, canoes and kayaks, and the mobilities and immobilities that are implicit in their journeys.

### **Surveying the articles**

The dual themes, of the mobilities of ships and shipped mobilities, which animate this special issue, are aptly opened up for discussion by William Hasty in ‘Metamorphosis afloat: pirate ships, politics and process, c. 1680-1730’. Here, Hasty highlights the mobile creation of spaces at sea, simultaneously underscoring the relation between materialities and the mobilities of ships and identities at sea. Hasty asserts the need to consider the ship as a space that is made by and involved in the making of mobilities. In this way, he foregrounds

materiality through the making, remaking and contestation of ship-space, positioned as a sort of mobile ‘floating assemblage’. The mobility of the (pirate) ship, then, in this account, is not as simple as something which moves (itself and other things) across or through space, but is a thoroughly mutable mobile, an object on the move in every sense.

“‘The great event of the fortnight’: steamship rhythms and colonial communication’ addresses the workings of a nineteenth-century steamship network, focusing in particular on ‘friction’ within this network. Anyaa Anim-Addo develops the theme of historical immobilities introduced by Hasty, though, unlike him, and also Andrew Davies (in the third paper in this collection), who focus on seafarers afloat, Anim-Addo explores the implications of maritime (im)mobilities ashore. As she demonstrates, such maritime rhythms were negotiated between spaces of sea *and* shore. Thus, while ‘Metamorphosis afloat’ highlights the inherent mutability of maritime space, “The great event of the fortnight” indicates the changing nature of maritime rhythms, a factor *within* individual shipping lines and the practices of particular ships.

Similarly, Andrew Davies likewise examines events in the history of colonialism, considering the circulation of information around the maritime world. Davies shares Anim-Addo’s interest in maritime rhythms, but instead undertakes this study from a predominately shipboard or ‘at sea’ perspective. ‘Learning “large ideas” overseas: discipline, routine and political lives in the Royal Indian Navy Mutiny’ interrogates seafaring mobilities in a twentieth-century context, and explores race, caste, religion in the formation of identity on naval vessels. Importantly, Davies foregrounds relationships between ship and shore, pointing to Royal Indian Naval vessels as sites of both connection and rupture in relation to land-based norms. In so doing, he presents the ship as a space of colonial ordering and resistance to such ordering processes. Like Hasty, Davies develops an analysis of the ship as assemblage that changes over time and like ‘Tracking (im)mobilities at sea’ (the fifth paper in this collection), ‘Learning “large ideas”’ probes questions of discipline and control on the oceans.

‘Unravelling the politics of super-rich mobility: a study of crew and guests on board luxury yachts’ shifts the perspective from historical subaltern to contemporary elite contexts, demonstrating in the process something of the vast scope that is possible in studies of the ship. Emma Spence probes the significance of ‘motive force’, ‘rhythm’ and ‘friction’ for the super-rich at sea, and examines the interplay between the experiences of the passengers and those of yacht crew, drawing out some of the important politics that necessarily attend the study of mobilities (Cresswell 2010). Although these very different routines to those

discussed by Davies, they nevertheless emerge as multifariously significant, and again offer an insight into life at sea, aboard ships that are spatially ordered and negotiated in direct relation to land-based social hierarchies. Furthermore, Spence develops Davies' attention to the formation of identities at sea by foregrounding the some of the ways that the super-rich perform these mobile maritime identities.

'Tracking (Im)mobilities at Sea: Ships, Boats and Surveillance Strategies' directly engages the theme of maritime power relations introduced by Hasty and by Davies, but shifts the focus towards formal state attempts to exercise control over and through ships at sea. Kimberley Peters asserts that the materiality of the ocean poses particular challenges for surveillance and, in this way, she reflects on what happens when land-based challenges are translated off-shore. The call of Hasty to take seriously the mobile materiality of the ship, is mirrored by Peters' injunction to interrogate the changing materiality of the ocean through which the ship moves. For both ship and sea, materiality and its inherent mobility when in contact with elemental and social forces matters a great deal. Hasty indicates that the material form of the ship was far from fixed, and Peters foregrounds not only the implications of the ambiguous legal status of vessels in international waters, but also the effect of the materiality of the ocean on attempts to police boundaries at sea.

'The packaging of efficiency in the development of the intermodal shipping container' interrogates shipped mobilities through a focus on the standardisation of the packaging of goods moved at sea. Craig Martin argues for a greater appreciation of the socio-economic significance of containerisation in the development of port cities and maritime communities, and highlights the importance of container shipping in globalisation and contemporary commerce. In so doing, he presents an analysis of maritime infrastructure, which echoes some of the concerns of Anim-Addo about the importance of the rhythms and routines developed in service of trade from a different theoretical vantage point. As for both Hasty and Davies, the concept of the 'assemblage' proves fruitful for Martin, though in this case it is not to consider the ship itself, but rather in the broader set of maritime logistics into which the ship is bound. In this paper, Martin demonstrates the social implications of the desire to engineer ever greater mobile efficiency through the material form of shipping and maritime infrastructure.

As well as making important empirical, conceptual and methodological contributions to the study of ships, the maritime world, mobilities and much else besides, the articles in this special issue suggest the great potential for studies of maritime matters, including but not limited to ships, through a mobilities lens. The papers, each in different ways, highlight the

emergent, unstable and slippery nature of the mobilities of ships and shipped mobilities. The ship, the lives of those who sail them and maritime logistics are theorised and explicated in a multitude of ways, notably as a mobile and mobilising assemblage. The importance of ever-fluctuating rhythms and routines to the operation of ships and the wider world into which they fit also emerges in this special issue. It is also made clear that attempts to assert order and control afloat exist in constant tension with the changeable nature of the maritime world, and that social practices performed at sea are negotiated between actors who are influenced by the ship. By taking consideration of mobilities off-shore, by examining the mobility of the ship and shipped mobilities in historical and contemporary contexts, this special issue develops, extends and enlivens the emerging concern with space, mobility and materiality at sea.

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